



USAID | BOLIVIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

HISTORIC RELATION

USAID is currently supporting the Bolivian people in six programmatic areas: Health, Integrated Development, Sustainable Economic Growth and Environment, Democracy, Food Security and the Special Development Activity Fund.



Chimanes community in San Borja

*USAID/Bolivia:
working together*

On March 13th, 1961, the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, announced the launch of the Alliance for Progress, a plan which sought to improve the lives of the American continent's peoples. Nine days later, he sent a message to the United States Congress which led to the creation of the United States Government's Agency for International Development, USAID.

However, the assistance provided by the United States to Bolivia did not begin in the 1960s. In fact, it goes back much further in time. Cooperation began in 1942 with technical assistance in the area of health, followed by education in 1944, agriculture in 1948 and road construction in 1955. Between 1946 and 1963, USAID and its predecessor programs contributed US\$1,286 million in assistance to Bolivia.

THE 1960'S

In the 1960s, USAID's cooperation program for Bolivia placed emphasis on economic progress through the construction of road and airport infrastructure and the provision of basic services. It also supported sectors such as mining – which in those days accounted for 80 per cent of the country's exports – as well as transport, agriculture and industry.

THE 1970'S

The 1970s saw the start of support for improved farming practices to increase the food supply and raise the nutritional status of the low-income population.

Programs were also taken forward to upgrade the skills of human resources in the fields of health, nutrition and education, and to encourage the development of renewable and non-conventional sources of energy. Between 1964 and 1979, USAID contributed more than US\$1,506 million to Bolivia.

THE 1980'S

Due to the political situation in Bolivia in the 1980s, the United States altered its assistance program at the start of that decade, reducing its support for projects and even suspending their implementation, with a consequent reduction in its technical staff. But in 1982, following the return to democracy, USAID's assistance was strengthened once again to support the new democratic process and alleviate the effects of the economic crisis. To achieve this, USAID backed programs to encourage increased participation by the private sector in production processes.

THE 1990'S

In the 1990s, USAID decided to support sustainable and participatory economic growth, as well as the democratic process and the antinarcotics program through alternative development activities. Between 1980 and 1999, the assistance provided by USAID amounted to US\$1,219 million. To stimulate economic growth, trade and investment were promoted. The aim was to generate 100 million dollars in new exports, through technical support and marketing assistance.

2000 AND ON

With the arrival of the New Millennium, USAID helped Bolivia to transform its economy by increasing investment, productivity, and employment in activities that did not involve growing coca. This strategic objective emphasized that projects should not be oriented solely towards crop substitution but should also promote the sustainable economic growth that would become an alternative to the coca economy.

Bolivia was seeking to achieve sustainable economic development that avoided damaging the environment; USAID therefore supported projects to enhance the management of forest resources and watersheds.

In the area of strengthening democratic institutions, USAID's support was aimed at improving the effectiveness and accountability of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. Projects were launched to provide technical assistance and support for democratic development in local government, strengthen civic and community institutions, and encourage non-party-political employment.